

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 1/6/2012 10:24:22 PM  
To: "Trish Taylor" <taylor.trish@epa.gov>  
CC:  
Subject: Info about water in more Pennsylvania communities

Dear Ms. Taylor,

I am following with interest the extra steps you are taking to be sure that the issues with well water contamination in Dimock are being completely investigated. Thank you for the news that the EPA has taken steps to deliver water to the fine people in Dimock.

I am student at Virginia Tech and have been studying the social impact of the gas development in Pennsylvania, particularly in Bradford County. There are cases of well water contamination in Bradford County and in many other localities in Pennsylvania which seem to be directly tied to the gas activity. In the course of my study I came across a historical water report which may be of interest to you. I cannot get anyone at DEP interested in the issue I have noticed with this water report, but I have spoken to the report's original author at USGS and he agrees with some of my thoughts. I believe that if you will take the time to puzzle out what I trying to communicate you will discover why the gas companies are in denial and why DEP is complicit in the denial. It is basic lack of understanding, and further, it is a need to marginalize the residents who suffer from these issues because they could jeopardize the exploitation that is going on by the gas drillers who want to do their work "cheap and dirty."

First of all, the hydrogeology report can be viewed at <http://eidmarcellus.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/USGS-Bradford-Report.pdf> if you do not already have a hard copy.

Please look at page 36 under "Barium." The EPA mcl (for municipal water) at the time of the report was 1 mg/L. The mcl now is 2 mg/L. The text refers to "12 wells which exceed the mcl level for barium." Due to the EPA's current definition of the mcl for barium, that would now be 2 wells, according to my understanding and confirmed by the author of the report. In addition, the median value should be discarded; because of the two wells, one tested at 3.9 mg/L (expressed in the chart as 3900 ug/L) and the other at a whopping 98 mg/L (expressed as 98000 ug/L). Two wells with such disparate numbers should not be considered statistically significant. The baseline values of barium in all the wells tested other than these two is under 2 mg/L and that should be considered the standard baseline for the study area unless pre-2008 gas industry data exists to show otherwise on any certain well.

The problem now is that DEP understands "the water has always been bad here." This is a viewpoint originated and perpetuated by the gas industry due to the biogenic methane that has been present in some water wells. DEP is not taking into account the generations of residents of Bradford County who have lived on century farms and have raised livestock and grown crops with good water.

Farmers and generations of families in Bradford County have not been drinking contaminated water nor have they been feeding it to their livestock. Individual people are being ignored and in some cases, ridiculed and shunned by those in the community who, for whatever reason, would rather believe the gas industry.

I can see one possible reason for DEP's viewpoint other than the gas industry's storyline. That is that the charts in the water report express values in micrograms per liter, while one expects to be looking for milligrams per liter if one is versed with EPA's values. Therefore, if one looks at a chart and sees the number expressed in micrograms, it appears that every well tested in greatly exceeds the EPA's mcl. I would like to assume that the DEP is operating not in bad faith, but that there is just this basic lack of understanding.

If you kind enough to look at the information I have provided here I would like to give you even more information which you might be able to use to help the people of Pennsylvania.

Thank you so much for your time.

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